133 [137] [162] desert-like as one moves north from Geidam. The population to the north of Geidam continues to be Kanuri (or Manga), but its density declines rapidly as one moves directly north. Geidam lies on the Yobe River, usually referred to as the Komadugu Yobe River, a redundancy since komadugu means river in the Kanuri language. The Yobe is a slowly moving stream that empties into Lake Chad, approximately 100 miles east of Geidam. Many streams and rivers of the north flow for some months after the rains and then dry up completely. The Yobe, however, is large enough to continue to flow the year round. Before the rains it is reduced to a stream thirty or forty feet in width; after the rains the river reaches its flood crest, when it may extend over half a [505] mile in width. Though one could travel from Geidam to Lake Chad on the Yobe River, the Kanuri do not use the river for travel or [172] for commerce. Along the Yobe river, some twenty miles east of Geidam, lie the ruins of Birni Ngazargamo, the ancient capital of the Mais which was sacked by the Fulani. Hence Geidam is not [36] far from the old center of empire. Along the river, and still further on, along the shores of Lake Chad, are numerous villages and towns.

131 [134] The geographic location of Geidam, aside from the drier sandy nature of the land because of its northern location, is significant because of its situation in relation to Maiduguri, 131 the provincial capital, and to Nguru, the rail-head. Maiduguri, 633 in the center of the province (see Figure 2), is important both 491 because it is the administrative and commercial capital and be-